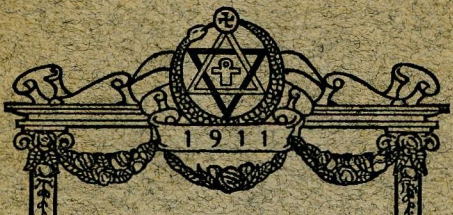

THE CORRESPONDENCES BETWEEN THE PLANES

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The will is that part of the ego which determines the course of action to be pursued when, after a long series of incarnations and the accumulations of a multitude of experiences, a stage in evolution has been reached which enables the ego to make permanent and final choice of its course. This stage is reached when the things of the world are seen to be of comparatively little value, when the part is recognized to be less than the whole in both quantity and value. This recognition is attained as the result of experiences extending over many incarnations the fruits of which are elaborated in devachan. In de-

vachan all facts, products of perception, are collated, compared and considered according to their mutual relations. They are set side by side in due order and values estimated. When this has been done the lower mental body is used by the ego to remove the unessential part from consideration leaving the essential, when it is seen that a certain something common to all the facts is left, a something wholly intangible, no longer a fact but something common to all the facts of a certain class and containing a part of every one of these facts. This something is called a concept. When this stage has been reached the lower mind has nothing further to do with the group of facts which were considered. They are set aside and a new group of facts is taken up to be treated in the same way, with the same purpose repeated—the

purpose of extracting from the new group of facts a new concept.

These concepts when fully formed are no longer the products or objects of lower mental action. They are the *materies* with which the upper manas concerns itself. Upper manas cannot consider facts. It can only consider concepts.

The correspondence is then established between the physical plane and the upper mental plane, the former being the field of action of lower manas, the latter being the object of consideration by the highest part of the Ego which is Atma.

Atma, the Will, is the Decider, the final Arbiter of the destiny of Man. For it is Atma that in the last supreme decision determines that course of action which leads to the Path.

Now this is brought about in this way. The lower manas, after long

experience in the physical world, becomes wearied with the multiplicity of facts, recognizes the higher value of concepts which are seen to be nearer to the centre of Knowledge than facts and, in this state of *vairagya,* ceases in part to engage in activity. This leaves the Ego freer than it has ever been to deal during Earth-life with the true objects of its own cognition, concepts, which are supplied to it by the upper mental body as we have just seen. The upper mental body is capable of taking cognizance of these concepts and collating them into wholes of far greater value than the individual concepts possessed and at last all concepts are aggregated and condensed into one great concept which represents the supreme product of the actions of the Ego through all the ages of its existence. The final concept of concepts is the recognition that all

facts and all concepts are but parts of a single whole, that all manifested nature and all reflections upon it are but parts of a greater unmanifested nature and of a greater mind beyond and above our finite minds. This means that the Ego recognizes that the things it has concerned itself with in all the past with which it has had to deal are but parts of a great whole with which it had never concerned itself and of which, indeed, it had been wholly ignorant.

The recognition of this concept is the greatest achievement of the Ego in all the incarnations. For its recognition alone makes possible the entrance of the Ego upon an entirely new course of action, a course directed to the discovery of the whole and of its meaning. The Ego speedily recognizes the unsatisfactory nature of its former activities and decides to occupy itself hereafter with the things which

it feels and knows are related to and lead toward a recognition of the whole. It sees that the whole is God, the completed part of Nature, as manifest nature (prakriti) is the incomplete part. Man, then, is himself but a tiny part of this great whole and to perfect himself and attain that peace which he longs for and the need for which is an essential part of his nature he must seek the whole—seek union with his highest Self and make himself one with it.

Now this decision is not made in all its perfection and finality at once upon its first recognition. It is at first seen but vaguely and indistinctly, but as incarnations multiply, this tremendous concept is more and more fully cognized and becomes an integral part of the *materies* of the Ego, being carried over from incarnation to incarnation, amplified, strengthened, fortified until at last it becomes so

strong that it is not possible for the forces of lower mind to dominate it. The Will aserts itself at last as supreme and the decision to follow The Path becomes the basis of the course of action.

The man who reaches this final decision to follow the Path must needs change his entire mode of life and conduct. He must choose only those activities which are in consonance with the new decision and with those things with which it is concerned.

This brings us to the need of considering what it is which leads man to make choice between various courses of action.

The lower manas is concerned with facts but it has the power to choose the facts with which it will deal. It has the power to act on facts according to their relative value for it. This distinction is made upon the basis of its own good. Those things which it finds

are most useful or pleasing to it are accepted, while those things which have the opposite effect are rejected. This power of choice, continually exercised, leads at last to the rejection of vast classes of facts and to the acceptance, as beneficial or desirable, of other great masses of facts.

The recognition of this separation into classes is the incipient knowledge of good and evil. It is desire which determines this separation of facts. It is desire which determines the final decision to choose the good instead of the evil. Desire is the appanage of the astral realm. And it is right that the astral world should be the seat of Man's activity through many incarnations.

The corresponding plane for the higher triad is the buddhic. For it is while the Ego is functioning as buddhi that he yearns for union with the Whole. He cannot long

for the whole until he can entertain a great concept and he cannot entertain concepts, as we have seen, until he can leave the field of action which is the sphere of lower mind. Buddhi is, therefore, the plane of aspiration and corresponds very definitely with the astral plane.

Now the importance of these correspondences is of the highest consequence, for upon their recognition depends the intelligent study of the course pursued by the Masters with Their pupils in the development of their growing powers. They place before their pupils objects of desire with the intention of stimulating buddhi. For when a pure desire is set in action a corresponding vibration at once affects the buddhic body. This leads of course to the development and growth of buddhi.

When They place new and hitherto unobserved groups of facts before their pupils they stimulate the upper mind to grasp the concepts

supplied by the lower mind from their classification and elaboration. And when the lower mind is stimulated to determine the concepts that belong to those facts the Will (Atma) is stimulated to determine the course of action which properly belongs to the new group of concepts as viewed according to their relative importance to it.

No man can determine his course of action who has not reached a stage of development sufficiently high to enable him to functionate upon the upper mental plane. For he is, before that time, a mere automaton swayed completely by the relative value of facts for the gratification of his astral nature. He cannot choose a higher course of action because he has no power to generalize, to rise above the iron bonds of the lower nature.

When he can determine his course by reference to the need for union with the whole he has reached the

point at which he can functionate in his causal body. Then he is in a position to enter upon the Path.

What determines his final course of action we have already seen. With the continual acceptance of a given course of action leading toward The Path there is definite progress in the development of buddhi which is the plane corresponding to the astral. When he reaches the stage where he definitely accepts the things of the higher life as the more desirable he decides to adapt his course of conduct to the new end in view. He places himself in contact with Those Whose evolution has reached a point higher than his own and by his contact he acquires opportunities to magnify his own conceptions of the desirability of the good.

No man can reach the goal who is not thus aided at this stage of evolution. For unaided, he cannot hold in view the *concept* of the Part and

the Whole, he cannot maintain the *feeling* that the Whole is more desirable than the Part and he cannot determine or *will* continuously the line of action leading to a reunion of the segregated Part with The Whole.

When the man chooses The Path he receives this aid at once. He is seen by the Masters immediately. Indeed he is known to Them as one who is ready for the great concept and the great determination long before he has knowledge of his own tendency. They provide him with opportunities to develop his powers with a view to taking the absolute and final step leading to the Path.

When the man has entered upon The Path he is sustained at the moments of supreme trial by the Masters who recognize that his will is not strong enough to maintain his course of action. When his aspiration fails They kindle it again into flame and keep the flame brightly burning.

One does not realize the difficulties that beset the Path until he tries to follow it and all the aid he can get is gladly accepted by the earnest chela.

The final act in the drama comes when for a moment the consciousness of the man is raised into actual union. For once this union has been experienced all lower union becomes unattractive by comparison, desire gives place wholly to aspiration. Once union has been, even for a moment, experienced the supreme concept is recognized to have the most perfect validity. All doubt is set aside and the need of the Masters' support is by so much diminished. As each new spiritual experience is added the final goal —complete and permanent union— is more nearly approached until at last after centuries of millennia of conscious service on The Path all phases of experience have been passed through and with the final

supreme initiation the Part merges into the Whole.

The final union enables the man to do for others below him in evolution what has been done for him. He joins the Band of Those Who, having completed Their evolution, can, without trammels, take part in the work of evolution and aid with perfect freedom in the uplifting of mankind.

What can we learn from this study? The lesson that all men are one day to tread the Path by the same series of steps—the assimilation of facts into concepts, the growth of buddhi from the refining of desire and the development of will from the repetition of multitudes of choosing by the lower manas. We may learn patience with our fellowman when we see him wallowing in those objects of desire that to us are no longer attractive. And we may learn the value of our own efforts in the

training of those about us who are at a lower stage of evolution. The goal for all is the same. The Path in the work of evolution and aid are those of the particular facts upon which the lower mind acts in the formation of its concepts. Let us, therefore, renew our determination to lend all possible aid to the Masters in Their struggle with the Maya of separateness to the end that our fellows may the sooner achieve freedom from its domination.

The man who lends this aid hastens his own evolution in an almost inconceivable degree. For he identifies himself, as it were prematurely, with the Masters, plays their role in a minor degree and so acquires a certain claim on Nature, the Whole, a claim which is gladly recognized. Nature reflects upon him her beneficent smiles and under that influence, he flourishes and grows. A man who consciously

thwarts the plans of the Masters acquires a lien of an opposite character upon the forces of Nature. They are then expended upon him not for his up-building but for the retardation of his growth. He is required to dwell for ages under conditions adverse to his development, while others more tractable are permitted to enjoy the opportunity which he missed.

Theosophists, who now have before them a complete set of facts and of guiding rules and precepts, are under a tremendous obligation to utilize their opportunities well. For if they do not they will in future incarnations encounter far greater difficulties than they have met with in former ones. They will be beset with temptations which, in this favorable incarnation, have been removed for them by the consummation of the tremendous, aeonic plans of the Brotherhood of

Adepts who have for ages planned to take advantage of this first moment of ascent upon the upward arc of evolution. The body of theosophists is a picked body of egos which, having favorably responded to training in former lives, are believed by the Brothers to have before them the possibility of forming in this incarnation the supreme concept and making the supreme choice!

Theosophists who feel the validity of these remarks would do well to measure their conduct carefully, for upon their conduct toward their leaders in difficult crises and upon their view of the situation at critical moments will depend the amount and kind of aid accorded to them *individually* by the Brothers in this and in future incarnations. Those who have aided much will deserve and receive much. Those who have impeded the efforts of their leaders will be relegated again

to the rank and file of men and their places filled by those who are pressing upward from the, as yet, undifferentiated body of men. Those who aid will be rewarded according to the intensity of their desire to aid and not according to the fruit of their action. Those who interfere with evolution in its special form will be repressed by Natural Laws according to the degree of their malevolence. No man may escape the operation of the Law whether it act for or against his so-to-say premature union with the Whole.